Neoliberalism and changes on the management of International Cooperation for $\mathsf{Development}^1$

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the intensification of the debate over the management of International Aid during the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s within OECD. The authors have related that intensification to the hegemony of the neoliberal ideology; to the efforts made in order to silence its direct relation to the deepening of poverty in the world; and to the generalization of its values, originated in the market but spread to other sections of society. To do so, the authors have analyzed the history of the management of International Aid in OECD's publications, Forums and Declarations since the 1970s. To sustain its core argument, the paper brings forward some critical readings on neoliberalism, and also some empirical results of the materialization of its policies in some countries. Those readings explicate how neoliberal policies are responsible for the generation of world poverty, evidencing what the authors call a structural contradiction in the increment of the focus on management of programmes of International Cooperation for Development.

Key words: International Cooperation for Development (ICD), International Agencies, International Aid for Development (IAD), Management, Neoliberalism.

¹ This working paper is a first and preliminary outcome of an ongoing research effort. Further quoting should mention the unfinished and crude aspect of this work.

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Introduction

The programmes of International Cooperation for Development (ICD) first appeared after the Second World War as a strategy of the then recently created Bretton Woods institutions and of the victorious powers to rebuilt countries devastated by the war. At that time, Afro-Asian decolonization processes, whose economies and ideologies were under dispute, only added fuel to the threat of expansion of the Eastern Communist regime.

In order to face that context, the West have since then been resorting to one important expedient, Development Aid (DA), which is regulated and accounted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), through its Development Assistance Committee (DAC). DAC is responsible for formulating technical orientations and for compiling statistical data concerning Aid flows to developing countries. International Aid for Development is historically provided by bilateral official International Cooperation organizations, by multilateral institutions and by non-governmental agencies of International Cooperation for Development.

Discussions about the effectiveness of International Aid pervade its history and the concept has been differently interpreted depending on what is the hegemonic doctrine of development in each period. During the golden ages of capitalist expansion of the 1950s and 1960s, for example, the predominating development doctrine was that of the welfare state based on Keynesian policies. Then, the efficiency of the Aid provided to the so-called third-world countries was measured in terms of its capacity of promoting structural changes towards the building of variables of welfare state in those countries in order to guarantee conditions to the expansion of capital and to political and social stability during the Cold War (PESSINA, 2013).

The weakening of the Keynesian doctrine in the late 1970s and the consolidation of the neoliberal doctrine in the 1990s worsened world poverty indexes, which led international organizations to recommend focused policies in order to fight against poverty. Those organizations argued for the maintaining of neoliberal policies while the State should assist the poorest among the poor, what should mean an effective implementation of social policies.

Despite critics to International Aid denouncing its neocolonial interests and the damages engendered by the dynamics of Globalization to recipient communities (AYLLÓN, 2006), international organizations have come to increasingly defend the capacity and the responsibility of International Aid in reducing world poverty. A wide agenda of debates surfaced between donating governments and multilateral organizations, generating commitments on practices and agendas that, if implemented, allegedly would lead to the reduction of poverty in a certain amount of time.

This paper, therefore, will demonstrate how the years between the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s were characterized by a series of meetings of international organizations dedicated to the debate on how to make the management of International Cooperation programmes more effective on reducing world poverty. It is implied in their perspective that the rise on poverty levels is exclusively due to the little effectiveness of the management of those programmes.

To do so, this paper followed the discussion on the management of programmes of International Aid within OECD. It was observed that such discussion was largely focused on the debate over the evaluation of Aid programmes since it is only through them that management strategies could be perfected.

Next to historical documents of International Cooperation (Commissioned reports and consultants, among others), all main OECD publications on management and evaluation of Aid from the 1970s until 2000 were studied, in favor of identifying a causality between the hegemony of neoliberal values and the rise of such debate within OECD. To reinforce the argument, the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the High Level Fora for the Efficacy of Aid and their respective declarations were mentioned.

Following that discussion, the authors resorted to theorists of the functioning of neoliberalism and to studies on the social consequences of the implementation of neoliberal economic policies in some countries.

Those subjects were put together to illuminate the incoherence—and the telling it is—of the exacerbated focus on the management of International Aid as a means of fighting world poverty while the neoliberal policies that worsen poverty are not only not questioned but also defended.

1 The Discourse of Effective Management of Programmes and Agencies of International Cooperation for Development as solutions to the Eradication of Poverty

OECD discussions on the evaluation and the impact of cooperation for development began in the 1970s, reaching a climax in the 2000, which represents the efforts aimed at dealing with the negative social effects of the capitalist system, as, for example, the underdevelopment that historically ravages peripheral regions of the system.

In 1968, due to a confidence crisis on the effectiveness of international aid for development, the president of the World Bank, George Woods, created a large international panel of experts to study the consequences of 20 years of aid for international economic development and to suggest norms likely to work better in the future⁵. As a result, the Pearson Report was elaborated in 1969, following the request of the new president of the World Bank, Robert S. McNamara, to the Prime Minister of Canada, Lester B. Pearson. The report recognized that modern progress "produced an enormous breach among industrialized countries and the rest of the world" and it hoped to investigate if international cooperative efforts made to promote the development of low income zones justified "a continuous expenditure of energy and resources from rich and developed countries and, in an affirmative case, to indicate what measures could be taken by both sides to strengthen and improve those efforts". (PEARSON, 1970, p.6).

The study concluded that aid must continue: on the one side, for moral and humanitarian reasons and on the other side, because of "the needs, not to say demands, of a world community more and more closely connected, more and more interdependent" (PEARSON, 1970, p.7). Pearson not only concluded in favor of international aid as a means of promoting development but he also envisaged optimistic future perspectives and recommended an increase in the volume of resources destined to cooperation from providing countries.

⁵ The golden age experienced by core capitalisms did not erase the characteristic trait of the world market, that is, inequality and underdevelopment. At the end of the 1960s the world was already questioning the inefficacy of the funds for aid for development in reducing discrepancies between the rich and the poor. International cooperation for development entered a crisis that reflected on the curve of the aid provided by rich countries: aid had rapidly increased between 1956 and 1961, slowly increased until 1967 and began to constantly decrease from 1968 on (COX, 1973).

In the same year of 1969, the Jackson Report (A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System) was elaborated under the supervision of Robert Jackson for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Jackson Report focused on the study of the effectiveness of the multilateral aid provided by the United Nations and its specialized organs. Jackson presents a devastating evaluation of the deficiencies of the institutional arrangements of that period, estimating "around 20% of waste due to the disputed interests among sectors, to the bad guidance of efforts and to the deficient execution of projects" (COX, 1973, p. 312).

"The major emphasis of the Jackson Report was on the strengthening of the management of the International Aid. The Report attacks the sectarianism of international organisms and suggests a more centralized deciding mechanism, based on better and complete information and analyses" (COX, 1973, p. 323). At the same time as it attacks the sectarianism of international organizations, the Jackson Report proposes the strengthening of its bureaucracies and the construction of strong alliances to support such bureaucracies as a means to increase their authority (COX, 1973).

Jackson would transform the bureaucracy of aid from a loose tangle of agents that intervene between rich and poor countries to a sophisticated system of decision making, equipped with a "techno-structure" capable of elaborating and following consistent development policies. The central mechanism of the newly proposed procedures would be an information system that the techno-structure of aid would feed and interpret, which would propitiate greater autonomy to the elaboration of development strategies (COX, 1973, p. 324)

Together, the Pearson Report and the Jackson Report advocate that the future of development policies depends on the increase of resources for International Aid combined with an increasingly stronger administration by international bodies (COX, 1973). A year later, in 1970, hence, experts representatives of the main donating countries, reunited under the OECD/DAC umbrella, met in Wassenaar, Holland, in order to discuss methodologies for the evaluation of the impact of programmes of Aid for International Development. It was the beginning of a series of discussions on the evaluation of impacts of international aid that would result in the systematization of a document called *Aid Evaluation: The experience of members of the Development Assistance Committee and of International Organizations*, published afterwards, in 1975. It was an exchange of experiences on methodological experimentation that was being developed individually by each DAC donating country, by the World Bank and

by the UN. In that document, donating countries report how they had been applying evaluation methodologies to their projects of international cooperation since the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. The document encompasses discussions such as: the definition of an evaluating system; methodological problems on the evaluation of Aid; procedures to evaluate social and institutional effects of aid; the organization of the evaluation by cooperation agencies; the participation of developing countries in the evaluation of the work (OECD, 1975, p.5).

Throughout the document, it is possible to observe the first results on the evaluation of Aid, indicating tendencies and debates that would be central to discussions on the evaluation of projects of International Cooperation for Development until today. On that occasion, for example, the English agency of cooperation— *Overseas Development Administration*— shared the difficulty of measuring and evaluating subjective political goals:

In addition to social objectives, projects often have important underlying political objectives; not necessarily the crude one of simply earning votes for politicians, but often more subtle objectives like enhancing political stability, reducing a sense of isolation of remote regions, and fostering racial or tribal harmony. How does one evaluate the degree of success in achieving objectives of this kind; Can economists even be expected to evaluate political factors; (...) Theses problems of the social and political objectives that may underlie the economic ones are very difficult to resolve. (OECD, 1975, p. 101)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) suggested the Methodology for the Planning and the Evaluating of Non-Capital Projects, presenting a model called Project Administration through the Logical Framework, a methodological tendency that would be confirmed as a rule with the passing of the years. It was a model of planning and evaluation of projects that would be recommended by the IBRD in the 1990s and that would be largely used on the planning and evaluating of local development projects (civil society ones included). For them,

The key element in Project planning and evaluation is the establishment of a logical framework for the Project which (1) defines Project inputs, outputs, purpose, and higher goal in measurable or objectively verifiable terms; (2)hypothesizes the causal (means-end) linkage between inputs, outputs, purpose, and goal; (3)articulates the assumptions (external influences and factors) which will affect the casual linkages and (4) establishes the indicators which will permit subsequent measurements or verifications of achievement of the defined outputs, purpose, and goal. (OECD, 1975, p. 107).

It begins, then, a process of perfecting evaluation methodologies that will significantly grow in the following years, according to the increasing need of proof of the efficiency of international cooperation in successfully fighting poverty – without ever questioning its causes, such as the systemic problems of capitalism itself. It is important to notice that, until that moment, the evaluation of projects of Aid for Development were practically non-existent, as it can be inferred by the following speech of the English commission:

It is preferable to find projects for which some initial appraisal of costs and benefits was made, so that a "bench-mark" is available, but all too often one finds that virtually no project appraisal of any significance was made if the project was appraised before about 1965. (OECD, 1975, p. 104-105)

Discussions within DAC/OECD on the Evaluation of Aid for Development would continue throughout the years, finally acquiring the form of a manual and of guidelines at the end of the 1980s, but especially in the 1990s, with the documents *Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation* (OECD, 1986); *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance*, (OECD, 1991); *DAC Principles for effective aid*, (OECD, 1992) e *Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance* (OECD, 1998).

It is important to say that the final second half of the 1980s marked the beginning of another period of significant reduction of resources destined to cooperation for development that would only grow again in the year 2000 (PESSINA, 2017). Such a reality intensified the focus on the management of Aid and on the proving of its efficacy.

The document *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance*, of 1991, is frequently corroborated by following OECD/DAC documents and even by non-governmental agencies for international Cooperation for development⁶, which confirms its key relevance. It is the systematization of principles for the evaluation of cooperation projects, complementing DAC's principles on the management of aid for development adopted in the 1988 document *Principles for Project Appraisal* – these principles provide general guidance to the role of aid evaluation in the aid management

⁶ See: MISEROR 2010b

process. One of their central messages is: "Aid evaluation and its requirements must be an integral part of aid planning from the start. Clear identification of the objectives which an aid activity is to achieve is an essential prerequisite for objective evaluation" (OECD, 1991, p. 5)⁷.

In response to its general mandate to strengthen the volume and developmental effectiveness of aid, the DAC has drawn up a series of policy principles addressing key areas of aid programming and management including Project Appraisal, Programme Assistance and Technical Co-operation. Aid evaluation plays an essential role in the efforts to enhance the quality of development co-operation. (OECD, 1991, p.4)

The DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance is a seminal document that presents general principles for the Evaluation as impartiality, independence, credibility and utility, as well as many issues relating to the management of Aid that must be observed in order to guarantee the viability of posterior evaluation. It is necessary to observe the importance given then to the evaluation of Aid for Development. On DAC/OECD words: "Robust, independent evaluation of development programmes provides information about what works, what does not and why. This learning contributes to improving the development effectiveness of aid and helps hold donors and partner country governments accountable for results."(OECD, 2012).

With the end of the Cold War, the ICD was again object to heavy criticism targeting its utility and efficacy, both from neoliberal sectors, which argued that the private investment was the only efficient solution to the promotion of development; and from the radical critics, that denounced the neocolonial interests and the damages caused by the dynamics of Globalization. It was in that context that DAC/OECD published, in 1996, the Report *Shaping the 21st Century: The Role of Development Cooperation*, an important milestone that established basic concepts on the efficacy of aid and that served as the basis for the definition, years later, of the Millennium Development Goals (AYLLÓN, 2006).

The debate around the Management of International Aid in favor of its efficiency to fight world poverty encompasses also the establishment of specific agendas. The 1990s were characterized by an expressive number of United Nation's

⁷ DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance, 1991, referring to the principles adopted from the Principles for Project Appraisal of 1988.

Summits in which different subjects relating to poverty were defined and which the programmes of International Cooperation should mirror. The fragmentation of the agendas for development was considered one of the responsible factors for the low efficacy of the efforts to diminish poverty. Those summits culminated in the Declaration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), in 2000, that encompass eight goals for social and economic development: 1. End hunger and misery; 2. Basic quality education for all; 3. Equality among sexes and the valorization of women; 4. Reduction of child mortality; 5. Improve the health of pregnant women; 6. Fight AIDS, Malaria and other diseases; 7. Quality of life and respect to the environment; 8. Everyone working for the development. Those eight macro-objectives unravel into 18 quantifiable goals for the 1990-2015 period, and into many other indexes of progress for each one of them. The Millennium Goals begin to guide speeches and actions of the main Agencies of Cooperation for Development, kind of becoming a unanimity on references in their websites and reports. Sustainable Development, gender, among others, have become omnipresent components of international cooperation, in some cases of mandatory inclusion for the approval of projects (AYLLÓN, 2007).

In addition to the establishment of well-defined rules to compel aid to focus on specific themes as a new requirement to its efficacy, the first decade of the 2000s will be characterized by an increase on the imposition of controls over the management of aid. The evolution of this train of thought is perceived in conferences and declarations of international organizations, especially since 2000, which have defined a series of criteria to be agreed in favor of reaching efficacy of aid. Among them, the High Level Fora for the Efficacy of Aid stands out, as it is said to be a step forward on the way to implementing an official aid for development of greater quality and impact.

The High Level Fora for the Efficacy of Aid have produced Declarations with specific presuppositions to improve action, to which all country parties and multilateral institutions must be committed. The first occurred in 2003, in Rome, and it was called High Level Forum for the Efficacy of Aid of Rome, which generated the Rome Declaration on Harmonization. There, countries and multilateral institutions committed to harmonizing their policies and means of cooperation, to working to reduce missions, exams and reports from donors, to simplifying and harmonizing documentation, among others (IPAD, 2003).

The Second High Level Forum for the Efficacy of Aid (HLF-2) occurred in Paris, in 2005 and produced The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. There, organizations and countries reaffirmed their commitment agreed in Rome for the harmonization and alignment of the delivery of aid, committing to accelerate the rhythm of change through the implementation of five partnership commitments: 1) appropriation, 2) alignment, 3) harmonization, 4) management centered in results, 5) mutual responsibility. Twelve indexes of progress were established for each of those dimensions in order to monitor the behavior of the Commitments of the Partnership until 2010. The establishment of objective and measurable Progress Indexes has made the Declaration of Paris the most well-known document among the agreements in favor of the efficacy of aid for development (OECD, 2005).

The Third High Level Forum for the Efficacy of Aid (HLF-3) happened in 2008, in Accra, and produced The Accra Agenda for Action, known as representing an effort of identifying primary and immediate actions to accelerate and deepen the implementation of The Paris Declaration until 2010, since "[we] are making progress, but not enough" (OECD, 2008, p. 1). In this document, three great challenges were established to accelerate the progress in the efficacy of aid: to strengthen the control and the appropriation of the development from partner countries; to build more effective and inclusive partnerships for development; to reach results of development and to openly provide evidence of those results.

The Fourth High Level Forum for the Efficacy of Aid happened in 2011, in South Korea, producing the document Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, which proposes "a new partnership that is broader and more inclusive than ever before, founded on shared principles, common goals and differential commitments for effective international development" (OECD, 2011a, p. 1). It was reaffirmed there the contribution of international aid in reducing poverty and reaching the MDG until 2015. Terms such as *results board, performance evaluation, manageable number of indexes, products and results, development mensuration, impact evaluation, focus on results, managing for results, transparency and accountability* among others, are pervasive in the Declaration, terms that align the directives of the efficacy with the management of private corporations. The Busan Partnership, furthermore, emphasizes the importance of the private sector, the public-private partnership, the opening of the markets, the opening to investments and to international trade in the fight against world poverty, among other recommendations related to neoliberal theories (OECD, 2011. PESSINA, 2013).

It can be concluded, according to the logics of the OECD, that world poverty was not significantly reduced, as projected, due to a low amount of resources (Pearson Report); to the bad management of International Organizations responsible for International Cooperation (Jackson Report); to the absence of focus on specific issues (UN summits); and to the low efficacy of the management of the Aid for Development in general (OECD Fora). The solution, according to such perspective, resides, on the one side, in the adoption of new management strategies that would enable the monitoring and the evaluating of results and, on the other side, in the adoption of technical and political principles drawn from those evaluations.

The following table tries to confirm the way that the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000 were characterized by the production of a great number of documents on the evaluation of the aid in an increasingly scale of sophistication.

Table 1: OECD/DAC publications on Evaluation

1975	Aid Evaluation - The experience of members of the Development Assistance Committee and od International Organizations
1986	Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation
1988	Principles for Project Appraisal
1991	Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance
1992	DAC Principles for effective aid
1998	Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance
1999	1. Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies 2. Evaluating Country Programmes, Vienna Workshop
2000	Effective Practices in Conducting a Joint Multi-Donor Evaluation
2001	1. Evaluation Feedback for Effective Learning and Accountability 2. Aid Responses to Afghanistan: lessons from previous evaluations
2003	1. Partners in Development Evaluation: Learning and Accountability 2. Review of Gender and Evaluation

2004	Lessons Learned on Donor Support to Decentralization and Local Governance*
2005	Joint Evaluations: Recent experiences, lessons learned and options for the future
2006	1. Evaluation Systems and Use, a working tool for Peer Reviews and Assessments (March) 2. Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations (October)
2002-2009	Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management: A valuable reference guide in evaluation training and in practical development work
2008	Guidance on Evaluating Conflict and Peacebuilding Activities - Working draft for application period
2010	 How to support capacity development through evaluation(February) The DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (April) Summary of key norms and standards - Second Edition** (June) Evaluation in Development Agencies (December)

Source: elaborated by the author

* This study presents a summary of recent evaluation of programmes and projects of support to the decentralization and to local governance in developing countries.

** It contains the main elements of the OECD approach including evaluation criteria, fundamental principles and quality standards.

2 Competition, Accountability and Performance—the World's new Reasoning

The changes in the management of international agencies that administer international cooperation for development invite us, in a way, to also contemplate institutional and State transformations that have happened since the last quarter of the 20th century. We are not here to say that those processes have any kind of simplistic relation of causality; it is curious, though, that those changes happened in synchrony, many times illustrated and argued for by the same similar key-words, when not the same words: efficiency, efficacy, accountability, governance, among others. The States that emerged allegedly autonomously in the 20th century, of course, have gone through their own transformation, exhibiting unique metamorphosis and bringing forth singular results throughout the years (HARVEY, 2005). Changes in the management of international agencies have neither followed identical premises among themselves nor in parallel with changes of the State.

Reactions or subjections to what we call neoliberalism, hence, have appeared in the form of macro-processes, as the reconversion of Latin America (MARINI, 1992), the dismantlement of the Welfare State (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016) and the mundialization of capital (CHESNAIS, 1996). As well as in the form of microprocesses, such as the restructuring of higher education (GIROUX, 2014), the resignification of the agro in developing countries (OYA, 2005), or even the incorporation of the efficiency logics within the large organized religions (BUCHARDT, 2017), among many others. Some patterns were telling, however, and they dialogue with those described in the previous section. It is convenient, then, to recall the broad meaning of those transformations that, in our understanding, come to determine the spirit of our time, the logics of neoliberalism.

There is a dense almost mystical mist enfolding the conception of neoliberalism. Although it is apparently a clear-cut and well determined historical social process, almost tangible today, its description by the critical thinking spreads through numberless alternatives. If, according to mainstream economic science and conservative circles, this notion intermingle with truth itself, a synonym for Reason (NGUYEN, 2017), for alternative, heterodox or even critical currents of thought, Neoliberalism plays the villain role, the source of all evil, the opponent to be fought: one of the few thing to unite neo, new and post-Keynesians (PALLEY, 2005. SHAIKH, 2005), structuralists and post-structuralists (PETERS, 2002), Marxists (DUMENIL; LÉVY, 2004), and even psychoanalysts (RUSTIN, 2014), among other currents of thought.

What we understand as neoliberalism, nonetheless, still seems imprecise: it is as if its existence were striking enough to be felt by everyone, even as a ghostly negative presence, but its body were always too foggy whenever we try to precisely see it. We understand that this imprecision is not due to a lack of quality in those researches which tried to understand neoliberalism, but to the own nature of the social process. In other words, we believe that there are as many equally important colors as possible behind the notion of neoliberalism because it is not a mere system, whose understanding would be the comprehension of its ins and outs and its transformation and processing mechanisms. It is convenient, therefore, to briefly compare some of those explanatory alternatives of what we call neoliberalism.

According to David Harvey (2005), neoliberalism emerges in the third quarter of the 20th century, first as an intellectual movement, then as a political strategy.

Harvey underlines that the neoliberal thinking assumes that it is necessary to guarantee freedom of decision and autonomy to everyone, unrestrictedly, freeing them from traditional oppressing forces. To reach this goal, however, they suggest that the freedom of the market is the only way to individual freedom, "market" here traditionally understood as Friedrich A. von Hayek has put it, as a spontaneous order, with its own laws, resulting from but not teleologically circumscribed to human action in society. From a practical standpoint, nevertheless, maintaining a free market needs the suppression, through the State, of every other form of freedom. In other (better) words, the government, under the logics of the market, guarantees broad freedom of economic action for a minority while restricting other freedoms to people as a whole.

Following that orientation, the neoliberal agenda materialized a discourse that frequently refers to a fairly short list of suggestions: (i) the deregulation of capital markets, (ii) the "de-bureaucratization" of labor relations, (iii) the disassembly of State controlled social security apparatuses, (iv) the gradual or even immediate elimination of custom barriers, (v) the disarticulation of the claiming capacity of trade unions, (vi) the abolition of subsidies and other State funded incentives to specific sectors, (vii) the monetarist reorientation of the macroeconomic management of the State, among others. According to Harvey (2005), running side by side to this political agenda of reconfiguring the management of the State, a tendency towards more flexible management strategies consolidated in the private arena of production in order to substitute the Fordist mode of production, considered as too static. Harvey, however, underlines that those principles were neither univocal nor universal; what we understand as neoliberalism was coated with particular characteristics in every space it has spread, many times sustained by principles sometimes opposing to those above mentioned.

According to Dumenil and Lévy (2004), that is so because neoliberalism, before being an effort of economic liberation, is a strategy for collective action. The movement gained strength since the crisis, critics and burial (not necessarily in that order) of the Welfare State in core economies of world. According to these authors, conjunctures of the first half of the 20th century that culminated in the Second World War have helped shape a scenery within the capitalist world that was characterized especially by the consolidation of the great enterprise; by the separation between possession and control of capital—and the consequent growth of the power of workers

in management positions—; and by a social pact that articulated a Keynesian macroeconomic management of State-funded social security apparatuses to institutional forms of decision-making coordination for the economic planning in tripartite arrangements among capital, labor and the State, the so-called neo-corporatism (SCHIMITTER, 1974)⁸.

This conformation—the basis of the Golden Thirty—nonetheless, witnessed the emergence of a very disturbing anomaly from the 1960s on, a systemic decline in profitability that would harm especially capital owners. This decline, which soon began a widespread crisis, would have, according to Dumenil and Lévy (2004), motivated a collusion among the rentier minority of core capitalist countries, specifically of its most traditional representative, the financial industry, to gain back the control of the State and of the economies as a whole. To do so, political parties engaged on the building of government agendas suggesting that list of reforms above mentioned—Harvey, for example, describes just like that the (almost) "hostile takeover" of the Republican party performed by conservative portions of the North-American society of the second half of the 20th century. These authors therefore classify Neoliberalism⁹ as, in essence, a coherent logical and articulated sequence of political decisions, as well as productive and ideological, that composes the new pattern of behavior of the capitalist class worldwide, whose objective is to create and reinforce mechanisms of wealth, income

⁸ Advocates of the French theory of regulation have consolidated the term "Fordist regime of accumulation" (BOYER, 2015, p. 76, "*régime d'accumulation fordiste*", free translation) to characterize this scenery until the first half of the 1970s. According to Robert Boyer (2015), on the one side the State would act to maintain adequate levels of effective demand and investment induction; on the other side, the great capitalist corporation would take advantage of scale and scope economies generated by mass production, which aimed at guaranteeing full employment of production factors, labor included. In this sense, obviously, the articulation among State, Labor and Capital was not only political but was also, and above all, material. As maybe never seen before in the history of capitalism (and probably never after neither), that regime of accumulation flourished associated to a specific mode of regulation, the *Fordist mode of regulation*. See: BOYER, Robert (2015). *Économie politique des capitalismes*: théorie de la régulation et des crises. Paris, França: Éditions La Découvert.

⁹ Dumenil e Lévy (2004) even ask if the term neoliberalism is advisable to characterize the social process under analysis. According to them, the term "neo" seems to refer necessarily to a primordial liberalism that would be therefore renovated. This original liberalism, however, the authors argue, was never univocal or maybe it has never really existed. Furthermore, the term "liberalism" imply principles and human values to which is hard to be opposed, since they suggest the defense of individual self-determination, the absence of oppression and the maintenance of life alternatives among which people could choose. Besides neoliberalism is everything but. Contrariwise, it is based on control, unemployment, curbing of autonomy, curtailment of freedom etc. Despite broader general traits, maybe the only thing constant in the many liberalisms, according to Dumenil and Lévy, is the reinforcement of the creation of social structures and institutions aimed at guaranteeing the growth of income and wealth of economic elites.

and power transfer from every other portion of society to themselves. In some cases, that strategy was deliberate and planned; in others, it was emerging and contingency, but always following the same orientation.

The neoliberal strategy was most patently discernible by the rise of international finances. As François Chesnais (1996) explains, in core countries (and many of peripheral others) there were rigid regulations above the financial system until the decade of 1970, regulations created during the 1930s and 1940s aimed at drastically limiting the capacity of action of its private and even public organizations. There were limits to capital input, prohibition for acting in parallel markets, barriers aimed at limiting operations to a single regional space, safeguards in relation to the participation of international capital in the sector, lists of financial products allowed among others, a huge list of measures created throughout the years to prevent another crisis like that of 1929. With the rise of the liberal movement and the coming to power of its representatives—first in the United Kingdom, then in the United States and finally the in rest of the world—practically every measure taken after that was done in order to end those regulations, which guaranteed a greater dynamic to capital and financial markets and, therefore, a greater flexibility to the search of investment opportunities.

Since then, this sector, that in the 1970s was largely fragmented in a myriad of little organizations of regional scope, passed through many cycles of capital concentration—mergers, acquisitions, strategic alliances, etc.—that enabled the constitution of powerful conglomerates of global scope acting in multiple financial fields, a real world hydra, as said François Morin (2015)¹⁰. All this power concentration was necessary, according to Harvey (1996), to enable them to impose themselves the financial logics over other spheres of society, or even better, the D-D' rentier accumulation. The main goal was to discipline: the State, through administrative reforms, privatizations and the disassembling of the Welfare apparatus; Labor, using flexibleness, repression of trade unionism and unemployment; and even the Company, through corporate governance and other apparatuses of management external control.

¹⁰ Morin (2015) even demonstrates that at the time his research was originally published, in 2015, international finances were subject to the humor of only 28 banks, which then controlled amounts higher than the debt of 200 nations together—assets around US\$ 50,3 trillion (while the world debt would be of US\$ 48,9 trillion), approximately 90% of bank financial assets in circulation. Together, they controlled amounts higher than the annual capacity of wealth production of the economies of the US, China, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom, France, and Brazil together.

Nonetheless, if the international rise of the Finance to the role of main character of capitalism was the most striking feature of the neoliberal strategy, its essence, according to Dardot e Laval (2016) is, in fact, control. These authors suggest that the ontological functioning of neoliberalism is that of being a new rationality of action not circumscribed to the management of the State nor of the Enterprise, but widespread, aiming at molding even the most subjective individual characteristics. Its main tactics would reside in the efforts of inculcating people with an entrepreneurial mentality in order to subsume every choice-even personal or intimate-to rational calculation in an endless dispute. In that sense, every aspect of human relations becomes ruled by efficacy and efficiency, by quantitative maximization of resultswhich necessarily presupposes goals, indexes, measuring, comparing, ranking and higher instances of control and evaluation, the so-called accountability-by competition and by the imperative of performance. Every aspect of social life, therefore, is assimilated and transformed by the neoliberal rationale: only the knowledge useful to generating higher earnings or competitive advantage is good and true; social justice only comes through competition; character is understood as the capacity of accumulating wealth, and so on.

It is interesting to notice; say Dardot and Laval (2016) that it is necessary to mold people to act that way, since the competitive behavior is not natural to individuals not even within the neoliberal ideology. The market, hero of every liberal narrative, appears with that function, not limited to being an economic institution, but gaining also a didactic and educative role in conforming individuals to the full realization of their potential (provided that selfish and egocentric) through competition. It is necessary for the market to be assisted from outside, its main principles guaranteed, so it can work properly. That is where the State comes into play: not a minimum State, but a strong interventionist State in order to mold behaviors and mindsets according to the logics of competition. The desirable intervention is the one that guarantees the competitive functioning of the market, as well as social structures that assure people choosing accordingly. The neoliberal State—the main representative, as well as the most vigorous guardian of the new universal rationality and of the values of competition, accountability and performance—plays *in practice* the role of substituting the docile and easily dominated *homo economicus* of modern disciplinary society

(ESCOBAR, 1995) for an aggressive (yet not revolutionary) *homo competitive*, equally unnatural, characteristic of this new hypermodern auto-disciplinary society.

There is a contradiction, however, haunting the liberal narrative. If in the one hand the neoliberal recipe takes the form of a single path¹¹ in the discourse of the development of the North¹² in practice this agenda for change has produced results very much apart from those first promised. According to Cooper (2012), both the US and the United Kingdom—nations that after the experimental laboratory carried out in Chile during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship were the first to openly bring about neoliberal reforms from the 1980s on—managed to control levels of inflation as well as to revert the tendency of fall in capitalist profits. That happened, however, at expense of a higher level of unemployment, of the dismemberment of structures of social security not to say the political disarticulation of trade unions and the criminalization of its members. Even in the 1990s, when a more impressive growth of those economies was observed driven by the expansion of the financial service sector (which was possible due to the deregulation of the sector), levels of employment did not recover as fast, and the working conditions deteriorated with the reduction of salaries, security and political access, resulting in a relative impoverishment of the working class.

In another example, Mexico has embraced the neoliberal logics since 1985 deregulating labor, allowing free flows of capital, carrying out privatizations, liberalizing the financial system, etc.—both in the governments of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (IRP), until 1999, and of the National Action Party (NAP), between 2000 and 2012. Even when it managed to resume economic growth and profitability in the 2000s, the Mexican population was still living in poverty, while

¹¹ Neoliberalism, as a dynamic socio-historical process, manifests concretely with specific singularities in each space, be it an organization, a city, a region or a State, according to the respective context. In the same way, assimilation and resistance to the advance of neoliberal logics will be inevitably distinct because the historical trajectories, specific availability of resources, roles in the international division of labor, habits, values and cultural traits, worldview patterns, institutions or even norms and laws are different for each human community (HARVEY, 2005). If we can say that the principle of accountability and the imperative of performance are a constant trait – the neoliberal reason imposes as a universal reason, as Reason itself – the specific forms that those principles take are adapted to the specific circumstances of concrete social relations in every particular human space, as if they were trying to integrate to the landscape in a way as to convince that they were always there. It is our opinion that is exactly this adaptability and malleability that makes neoliberalism omnipresent and still hard to delimitate.

¹² Materialized above all in the classic maxim repeated over and over by Margaret Thatcher, "*There is no Alternative*", TINA, for close friends (PLEHWE, 2009, p. 01)

urban violence scaled up and trafficking networks grew (of drugs, weapons and people) integrated to consumptions centers in the US and Europe (MURILLO, 2017). The North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which integrated Mexico, Canada and the United States of (North) America in the largest tariff reduction agreement ever seen at the time, and which was built in accordance to the neoliberal recipe, brought dubious effects—large growth of exportations but also of importations (WADGYMAR, 2014), FDI from transnational companies (MILLÁN, 2014) seeking underemployment in conditions analogous to slavery (ARREGUI, 2016), gentrification of urban areas (MARTÍNEZ, 2015) and many others. In the social arena, indexes like GINI (from 0,469 in 1990 to 0,435 in 2010), HDI (from the 60th position in 1990 to the 70th in 2010) and the Purchasing Power Parity of minimum wage (PPP od U\$190 in 1990 but U\$ 188 in 2010), and even the percentage of people under the poverty line (approximately 53% in 1990, and 51% in 2010), did not show any improvement or worsened in past years¹³. The same way, countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Equator and Colombia—which also suffered with the neoliberal reconversion of Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, according to Marini (1992)—, have shown dreadful economic and social outcomes from the neoliberal governments there installed, what has motivated a reaction in the first decade of the 2000s (ROJAS, 2015)¹⁴.

¹³ Data from the United Nations Statistics Division, World Bank Statistics. Available at: http://data.un.org/. Last access on May 22nd 2015.

¹⁴ In the beginning of the 2000s, in many countries of South America, populations impoverished by two decades of neoliberalism and crises have taken to power parties and politicians that opposed the neoliberal yaw. As Emir Sader (2010) demonstrates, there were two main characteristics to those governments—that in the apex of the enthusiasm were called post-neoliberal in spite of never reverting the monetarist macroeconomic management of the State: (i) they positioned themselves within the political left spectrum; (ii) they opposed US interference in the region.

Without ever breaking off with their main commercial partner, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela, among others, have articulated to build for themselves their own forms of international insertion alternative to the US imposed terms of the Washington Consensus. The efforts to put the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) into action were paralyzed. A network of South-South cooperation and relations were formed, and international bodies of dialogue were created, such as the Union of South American Nations (USAN), alongside initiatives to promote regional integration transcending the mere commercial partnership as the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA), among others. As a result, poverty declined in those countries, social inequality diminished, domestic economy grew strong, labor guaranties stabilized, and truly democratic standards were accomplished, thus raising the hopes of a New Era. At least for a while.

After a decade, however, some political and economic circumstances aligned to dismantle a good part of those efforts. The first step was the political position taken by mass media corporations— mostly controlled by oligopolies in Latin America—, daily (sometimes aggressively) opposing those governments. Furthermore, some "spontaneous" social movements were formed against those leftist governments, headed by young voices, encompassing the manufacture of very elaborated

In short, every place where the neoliberal strategy gained power and could implement its principles as means of development, dubious effects were observed in terms of economic performance *stricto sensu*—with instabilities, crisis and discontinuities—which has been associated to the stagnation, or even the worsening, of

At the same time, there was a surge of anonymous propaganda within social networks whose main objective was the dissemination of fake news aimed at vilifying the public image of leftist politicians and their family members. Within this context, local and transnational capital froze investments—the lockouts—, artificially creating a deep economic crisis in those countries, leading to unemployment, inflation and even shortage crises, which then inflamed opposition.

Subsequently, clearly violent or constitutionally disguised *coup d'états* were articulated in Paraguay, Brazil, Honduras, Bolivia and Venezuela. Three countries, Brazil, Paraguay and Honduras, had their "post-neoliberal" governments overthrown, substituted by right-wing politicians clearly aligned to US interests and to the neoliberal agenda. In Argentina, after a dead-lock that lasted years, its neoliberal politician was elected as president in 2015. In Venezuela, the instability was such that it escalated to street confrontation and to the creation of armed militia by the entrepreneurial elite aiming at challenging a government increasingly corned by internal and external pressures.

It is important to say that such a sequence of events was very much like the one that preceded the Brazilian corporate-military dictatorship of 1964, the Chilean Pinochet-corporate dictatorship of 1973, the Nicaraguan coup and those many others antidemocratic and authoritarian regimes that the US supported during that period to guarantee their interests in Latin America. It is certainly not a coincidence, given the new waves proclaimed by the "transformational diplomacy" announced by Condoleezza Rice's secretariat in the beginning of the 21st century.

See: (i) AYERBE, Luiz F. (2009). Diplomacia transformacional y poder inteligente. Continuidades y cambios en las agendas latinoamericanas de George W. Bush y Barack Obama. Pensamento Propio, v. 14, n. 2, p. 87-116, July/Dec. (ii) BIROLI, Flávia. (2017). A mídia, a crise e o golpe. Revista Dialética, v. 8, p. 30-34, Mar. Available at: http://revistadialetica.com.br/wp- content/uploads/2017/03/003-a-midia-a-crise-o-golpe.pdf>. Last access in June 29, 2017. (iii) PENTEADO, Claudio L. de C.; LERNER, Celina. (2015). A direita se mobiliza: estudo do uso das redes sociais de internet por grupos de direita no Brasil. In: Pensacom Brasil, IIª, 2015, São Bernardo do Campo, SP. Anais... Available at: http://portalintercom.org.br/anais/pensacom 2015/resumos/025.pdf>. Last access in June 29 2017. (iv) SADER, Emir (Org.). 10 anos de governos pós-neoliberais no Brasil: Lula e Dilma. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2013. (v) SECCO, Lincoln. (2016). El golpe de abril de 2016. Revista Política Latinoamericana, v. 2, n. 2, July/Dec. Available at: <http://www.politicalatinoamericana.org/revista/index.php/RPL/article/view/39/24>. Last access in: July 28, 2017. (vi) SERBIN, Andrés; MARTÍNEZ, Laneydi; RAMANZINI Jr., Haroldo. (2012). Introducción. In: . (Org.) Anuario de la Integración Regional de América Latina y el Gran Caribe 2012. Buenos Aires, Arg.: Clacso. p. 7-18. (vii) TIBLE, Jean. (2016). Golpe à brasileira. Revista Política Latinoamericana, v. 2. n. 2. July/Dec. Available at <http://www.politicalatinoamericana.org/revista/index.php/RPL/article/view /38/23>. Last access in: July 28 2017.

propaganda texts and videos of high esthetic quality, supervised by very expensive marketing professionals, clearly not affordable by a few (even if very rich) citizens.

The origins of the financing of that material are somewhat shadowy, but knowingly and widely supported by the conservative north-American think tank Atlas Network. Moreover, some self-proclaimed antipolitics public figures have risen, especially businessmen with clear ties to right-wing parties, trying to present themselves as outsiders ready to lead the opposition "against everything that is there". Several corruption complaints popped, most based on factoids, against many members of those leftist parties, followed by hasty trials and proofless condemnations. A great amount of right-wing street demonstrations took place, notably led by the elites and the middle class, arguably fighting for political moralization.

social conditions in general (HARVEY, 2005). As the study conducted by Thomas Pikketti (2014) shows, during the last decades of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century—the neoliberal years—despite the world economic growth, income inequalities among social, professional and even national classes have increased more than proportionally. While dominant social fractions lived an increase in comfort and access to goods and services, huge portions of the world population continued to live in extremely fragile conditions.

On the other side, it is possible to infer from the work of Ulrich Beck (2008) that even in core countries an increasing impoverishment of the working class is observable, thanks to unemployment, lack of social assistance due to reforms and the income distancing from those on the top of the pyramid and all the rest. The author even draws a nefarious prognostic, once he suggests that the developed world should to pass through a "Brazilianization" process (BECK, 2008, p. 110), a stairway to poverty, extreme flexibility of labor relations, destruction of social security, gore enrichment of a tiny elite and the individualization of responsibilities and culpabilities¹⁵.

Broadly speaking, the processes of financial deregulation that are at the basis of the neoliberal strategy have promoted the transition to a mundialized economy under the aegis of the financial system. In this context, free flux of capital reaches international markets in a volatile situation that, sooner or later, will produce financial crises of many kinds. These crises, since the "Black Monday" of 1987, going through the crisis of the Mexican peso (1994), of Asia (1997), of Brazil (1997), of Russia (1998), of the dot.com of the 2000s, of Argentina (2001-2002), to the great recession of 2008, among many others, have demonstrated both the instability and the incapacity of the system of guaranteeing a sustainable growth (ROBERTS, 2016). Some would actually say that those crises have a very important role in the process of capital accumulation and centralization, therefore being tolerated and even desired by some

¹⁵ On the other hand, Vera Westphal (2010) draws attention to the fact that Ulrich Beck does not build this new terminology neither empirically, nor from a trust-worthy characterization of Brazilian reality, nor even by a systematic comparison between Brazil and Europe. The term appears much more as a rhetorical reinforcement of the argument that denounces the dismantlement of social conquers in Europe when facing the neoliberal agenda. See: WESTPHAL, Vera H. A individualização em Ulrich Beck: análise da sociedade contemporânea. *Emancipação*, Ponta Grossa, v. 10, n. 2, p. 419-433. Available at: http://www.revistas2.uepg.br/index.php/emancipacao. Last access in June 29 jun, 2017.

capitalists that foresee, produce and then take advantage of them to broaden capital gains (HARVEY, 2011).

It is true that although neoliberalism has emerged as an answer to a crisis—the alleged crisis of the Welfare State—and has crystallized as common sense, as if there were indeed no alternatives, the neoliberal agenda has produced even deeper crises without being capable of presenting not even one single example of success. On the contrary, wherever it passes, it delivers only poverty, social disintegration, extreme individualization and economic imbalance. The inherent contradiction of the neoliberal discourse is that, in spite of presenting itself as the only possible way of reaching social growth—which they cynically call *modernization*—its main and more striking effect, the only characteristic that unites the variegated forms of manifestation of the neoliberal agenda, is regress.

Conclusions

This article has gone through the discourse of evaluation and management of international cooperation in OECD publications, evidencing how it significantly grew during the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s. Those two decades were too the apex of the efforts towards the systematization of goals to be reached concerning poverty and misery reduction in the world, culminating in the historical establishment of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The Fourth High Level Forum for the Efficacy of Aid that followed the MDG reinforced and broadened the debate about the management of aid to development. UN agendas and the principles agreed within OECD became imperatives to the organizations that worked with international cooperation.

Management tools were therefore imported from the management perspective inspired by the private company. The techniques are the same as those developed to the private sector especially after the Second World War and the Fordist Model, as the PDCA Method (*Plan, Do, Check and Action*) and the Process Management Quality Tools, the Logical Framework Methodology, among others. The neoliberal State brought with it a new universal rationality and its values as competition, accountability and performance to the heart of organizations, also to those dedicated to International Cooperation for Development. From the reading of Dardot e Laval (2026), this paper underlines again the process that denounces the naturalization of a pretense scientific basis of management that more than serving to science, it works to reproduce a pattern of behavior that builds the world in the image and likeness of economic elites. It demonstrates the expansion of the market's modus operandi to other social circles, or another branches of the State which, because of its goals (fight poverty), maybe should not embrace such modus operandi.

Such process can be observed in the considerable amount of publications dedicated to the techniques of management, which are indispensable tools to the process of management improvement. Documents such as OECD "DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation" reminds us that these standards "were developed primarily for use by DAC members, but broader use by all other development partners is welcome" (OECD, 2010, p.5), inviting other actors to adopt such modus operandi. Indeed, some researchers have demonstrated that technical principles and agendas of International Cooperation for Development became paradigm for so-called "alternative" non-governmental agencies, significantly affecting their work too. The fact that they are mostly financed by their governments and citizens represented a direct or indirect imposition of same the criteria (KRAYCHETE, 2015; MOTA, 2015; PESSINA, 2017).

The main issue we tried to evidence here, however, was the preposterous effort to work under the premise that the non-eradication of poverty is due to an alleged bad management of International Aid.

We could not find in those debates a questioning about the real causes of poverty or of its maintenance or even increase in the world. That is to say that there is an effort to attack underdevelopment, hunger, social problems, without considering their causes. Studies proving that neoliberalism not only does not fight poverty but actually increases inequality within and among countries are ignored.

Such debates, when focusing on the management of International Aid, not only omit the causes of poverty but also help to disseminate the ideology of development that generates the effects the ISCD tries to minimize, as we could see in the Busan Declaration where neoliberal measures are clearly recommended as a solution towards "An Effective Development".

We conclude, therefore, that the exacerbated focus on the management of International Aid as a solution for the problem of world poverty, evident especially during the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s, carries within itself a structural contradiction. It could be argued that such perspective subsists in the debate on world poverty eradication, hence, because it is part of a articulated sequence of political and ideological actions that aim at shielding the hegemony of the neoliberal model of development and its mechanisms of transference of wealth, income and power.

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